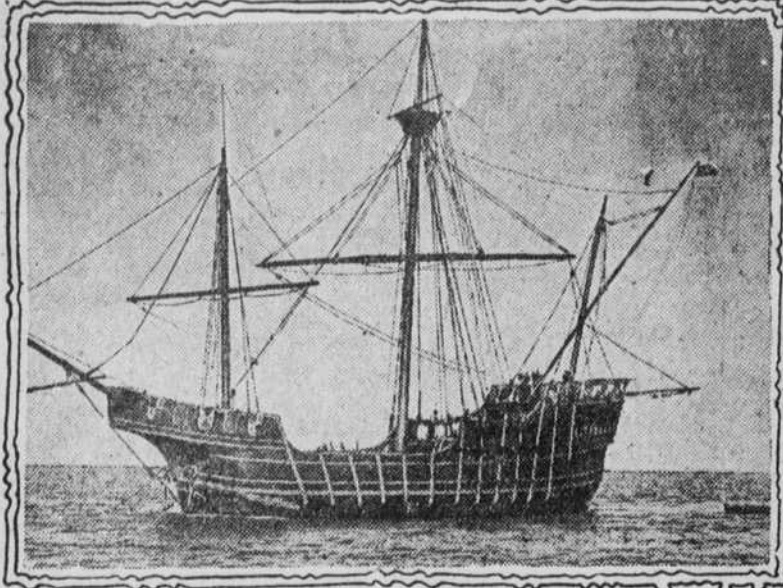


Thanksgiving Day with the Puritan Pilgrims



THE MAYFLOWER—A REPRODUCTION
BUILT FOR THE CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR

How the Custom Came To Be Adopted—Voyage of the Mayflower Undertaken At Wrong Time of Year—Colonists Sailed for Delaware, But Were Driven Far Out of Their Course.

By RENE BACHE

WE are indebted for our Thanksgiving Day to the Puritan Pilgrims of New England. Not, however, that the idea was original with them. They acquired it in the Netherlands, where, among the Dutch, it had long been the custom to appoint from time to time a day of special thanksgiving for victory in war, deliverance from famine, or other blessing.

An unusually bountiful harvest was deemed a fitting occasion for the appointment of a Thanksgiving Day by the earliest governors of the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay; and, as the fruitful earth began to reward more abundantly the labor which the settlers bestowed upon it, the harvests became so uniformly plentiful that the celebration came to be an annual affair.

During the first few months after their arrival the Pilgrims suffered a good deal for lack of food. But that hardship, as well as the perils of their voyage across the Atlantic, was due to a mistaken choice of the time of year in which to undertake their adventure. If they had started in early spring, they would have reached America at the beginning of summer, and the forests being full of game, and the sea and rivers full of fish—not to mention lobsters, oysters and clams—they would have had plenty to eat, while escaping the unsheltered miseries of a New England winter.

Bound For Delaware

Indeed, they would not have landed in New England, and history to that extent would have been altered. For their intended destination was Delaware, and their arrival in Massachusetts was due to the circumstance that the Mayflower was driven far out of her course by unfavorable winds. It was a miracle that she was not lost with all on board, for the voyage was very stormy, and on one occasion in mid-ocean, when one of her timbers had split, she was saved from destruction by a big iron screw.

The Puritans were dissenters from

the established church of England, and, persisting in the pursuit of their own methods of worship, they were persecuted. To escape this, many of them emigrated to the Netherlands in the years from 1602 to 1609, settling in the city of Leyden. There they had all the religious freedom they wanted; but they were not content. The Dutch looked upon them as queer folks—as doubtless they were—and their peculiar views, more especially their asceticism, did not invite supporters. Their numbers, instead of increasing, gradually diminished.

Thus it was that they were led to depart for the New World, their expedition being financed by certain "merchant adventurers" in London. They sailed from Southampton on the fifth day of August, 1620, in two ships, the Mayflower, which was a craft of 180 tons, and the Speedwell, somewhat smaller. Before they had gone very far the Speedwell sprang a leak and proved unseaworthy. So the Pilgrims, as they called themselves, were obliged to put back to the port of Plymouth, whence all of them who could be accommodated on board the Mayflower, 102 in number, made a fresh start September 6.

Cape Cod Ahoy!

It was not until November 9 that, after a voyage of nine weeks, during which they were blown hundreds of miles off their course, they sighted the low, sandy peninsula of Cape Cod. The weather was bitter cold. Capt. Miles Standish and a number of men went ashore to spy out the land. They saw a few Indians, watching them curiously from a distance, but the savages could not be induced to come near. Five weeks were spent in cruising up and down the coast, looking for a locality suitable for a settlement, which, when finally decided upon, was named Plymouth.

The Mayflower first dropped her "mudhook" in Provincetown harbor, where Peregrine White, the first Pilgrim child to see the light in America, was born. After arriving at Ply-



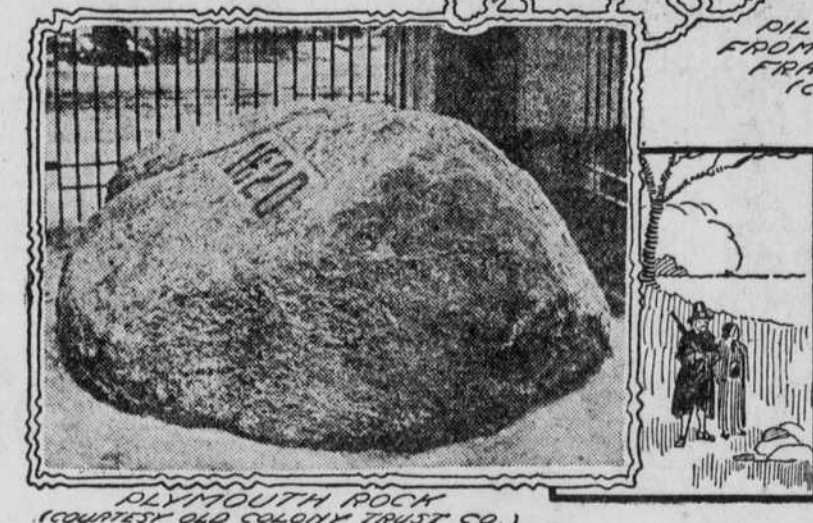
LOVERS WENT AWAY
ON THE
VENTURED ABROAD



PILGRIMS GOING TO WORSHIP—
FROM THE ORIGINAL PAINTING BY
FRANK T. MERRILL
(COURTESY OF OLD COLONY TRUST CO.)



BRISILLA AND JOHN ALDEN—
"WHY DON'T YOU SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, JOHN?"



PLYMOUTH ROCK
(COURTESY OF OLD COLONY TRUST CO.)

mouth, most of the women and children stayed for a while aboard the ship, shelter on shore being lacking. To add to the hardships of the colonists, disease attacked them, and during that first winter fifty-one of them died. The little vessel brought a crew of twenty men, in addition to the 102 passengers, and its accommodations must have been badly crowded. Records at Lloyd's, in London, give its length as ninety feet, with twenty feet beam and fourteen feet depth of hold.

When spring at last came and summer advanced, the prospects of the colonists brightened. They built cabins and storehouses; also a rude fort on a hilltop. Around the little village they erected a strong and high palisade, for protection against savages and wild beasts. During the summer twenty-six acres were cleared and planted, and by early fall seven houses formed a beginning of the main street, with others building. For lack of glass, oiled paper was used for window-panes.

The Indians

In the meantime, in the spring of that year, an Indian named Samoset, who had picked up a few words of English from fishermen on the coast of Maine, made friends with the Pilgrims; and this led to a treaty with

Massasoit, sachem of the Wampanoags, a tribe dwelling along the shores of Massachusetts Bay. The pipe of peace was duly smoked, and the treaty of peace thus concluded was not broken for more than half a century.

The sachem of another tribe, the Narragansetts, whose name was Canonius, had no such peaceful inclination. He wanted war, and, to signify his blood-thirsty intention, he sent to Bradford, the governor of the colony, a snake-skin filled with arrows. It was a formal declaration of hostilities; but Bradford, deeming mild measures unwise, dispatched in reply a snake-skin filled with gunpowder and bullets. It was pure bluff, for the fighting men Bradford could muster were a mere handful, whereas Canonius had 2,000 warriors at his back. Nevertheless, it worked, and no attack on the settlement was made.

The first governor of the Plymouth colony was John Carver. He died early in the spring following the arrival of the Pilgrims, and was succeeded by William Bradford. It was Bradford who, according to the records, began on Christmas Day, 1620, "to erect ye first house for common use, to receive them (the colonists) and their goods." And it was he who

drew up the famous "compact" which formed the basis of the colony's government, and in which Plymouth is spoken of as located in the "northern part of Virginia."

A Big Thanksgiving Feast

The first real Thanksgiving dinner in New England was an impressive affair, being attended by the sachem Massasoit and ninety of his befeathered warriors. It was in fact a big peace celebration, and the feasting lasted three days. One can well imagine how busy the Pilgrim mothers and daughters must have been with all the turkeys to roast, pumpkins and puddings to be made, and other cooking. Fortunately, by that autumn food was plentiful, and cheap enough, inasmuch as it was to be had for the trouble of shooting or catching it.

In the fall of 1621 the good ship Fortune arrived at Plymouth with fifty additional and very welcome colonists. The vessel on her return voyage carried from the settlement beaver skins, choice wood for wain-scotting, and other merchandise, wherewith to make a first payment to the merchant adventurers already mentioned. Unluckily, she fell in with a French cruiser—France being at war, as usual, with England—and was robbed of everything valuable in her cargo.

But the colony, once fairly upon its legs, so to speak, thrived apace. The Pilgrims were mighty industrious folks, and enterprising. They were also honest, and the merchant adventurers, in the upshot of their little speculation, got their money back with a satisfactory profit. In 1627—only seven years after Plymouth was founded—the colonists had become so well-to-do that they were able to buy up all the stock of the enterprise, paying for it in full.

This was certainly remarkable, when it is considered that ten years

after Plymouth was settled it had only three hundred people. But the Pilgrims were only an advance guard of the Puritan host which a few years later began to arrive in numbers, spreading over New England and planting settlements all along its coasts. In 1643, when the New England confederacy was formed, Plymouth could boast a population of 3,000 souls.

Progress Of The Puritans

The sailing of John Winthrop and his company from England, in April, 1630, led to the founding of Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, and other towns in that region. During that year seventeen ships arrived bringing more than 1,000 people. By 1640 the number of English people settled in New England had reached 26,000.

The rules and regulations which governed the lives and conduct of the Puritan settlers were extremely rigid and in some respects harsh. There were few large farms, chiefly because nobody was allowed to build a house more than two miles from a church, or, as it was called, a "meeting house." One object of this law was to keep the population compact and in good posture for defense. Also, public order was more easily maintained under such conditions, and the duties of religion more absolutely enforced.

Mayflower and Plymouth Rock

What became of the Mayflower? There has been a good deal of dispute about that. But the matter has been very thoroughly investigated, and the facts are as follows:

The records of Trinity House, in London, show that the Mayflower was condemned as unseaworthy in 1613. She must therefore have been repaired before the Pilgrims bought her, in 1620.

She made at least two voyages from England to Plymouth, Mass., after her first delivery of colonists. Bradford's

records tell of her bringing a fresh lot of pious Puritans in 1629. She was in Charlestown harbor in 1630.

Then she vanishes from historical view for twenty years. About 1650 she was transferred to the East India trade, made a number of voyages around the Cape of Good Hope, and, in 1701, was wrecked near Karachi, on the east coast of India.

A substantial memorial of the Puritans' pilgrimage that still remains is the famous rock on which the colonists landed at Plymouth. It was a rock of granite, and has had vicissitudes since then. Cut away from its base in 1774, it was dragged by a twenty-yoke ox team to the town square, for use as a support for a flagpole. In 1823 it was removed to Pilgrim Hall, whence it was returned forty-odd years ago to the shore of Plymouth harbor. Incidentally to these successive transfers it was broken into three pieces. Two years ago the pieces were patched together neatly with cement, and the rock now occupies its original place on the shore line.

It was not until 1864 that the State of Massachusetts declared Thanksgiving Day an annual and legal holiday. The other New England States soon following her example. But even then it had long been a custom for governors of States all over the Union to appoint the last Thursday in November as a day of thanksgiving. When the seat of Federal government was in New York City, George Washington, in obedience to a resolution of Congress, issued a proclamation naming October 3, 1789, as a "day of thanksgiving by the people for the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially in affording them an opportunity to peacefully establish a form of government." Since that time his successors in the Presidential chair have annually followed his example.

THE TURKEY IS A STEPCHILD



DRIVE OF TURKEYS
ON THE WAY TO MARKET

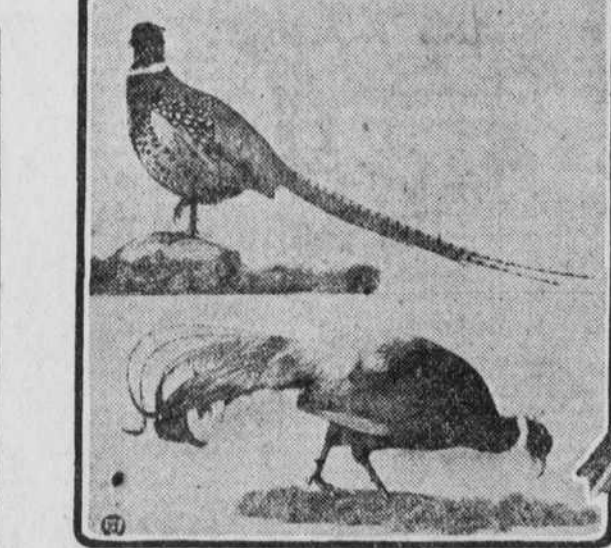
Thanksgiving Bird Was Hatched From Wild-Turkey Egg By the Barnyard Hen—Kinsman of the Pheasant.

By FRANKLIN JOHNSON

EVERY time you eat a slice of Thanksgiving turkey, you are increasing your indebtedness to the common American hen.

You may not know it, but the barnyard hen is the stepmother of the Great American Turkey. If it had not been for the every day chicken the present generation would have had to find some other birds for its Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

This state of affairs came about through the rapid disappearance of the native wild turkey of the North American continent. The wild bird was the original Thanksgiving dinner of the early Pilgrims in New England. With the increased hunting that came with the growth of population, the breed became scarce, until it reached the point of threatened extinction.



PHASANTS (TOP) RING NECK—
(BOTTOM) MANCHURIAN

found so essential to the feasts of the holidays. The egg supply gathered by the Pilgrims provided hatchlings of sufficient size to care for the immediate needs of the colonies and enabled them to establish flocks for breeding.

This is the secret of the present abundance of turkeys in the American market. In hatching the eggs of the wild birds the hens of the New England barnyard were conferring a favor of lasting character—and one that was nothing short of their patriotic duty as good Americans.

Turkeys Have Grown Larger

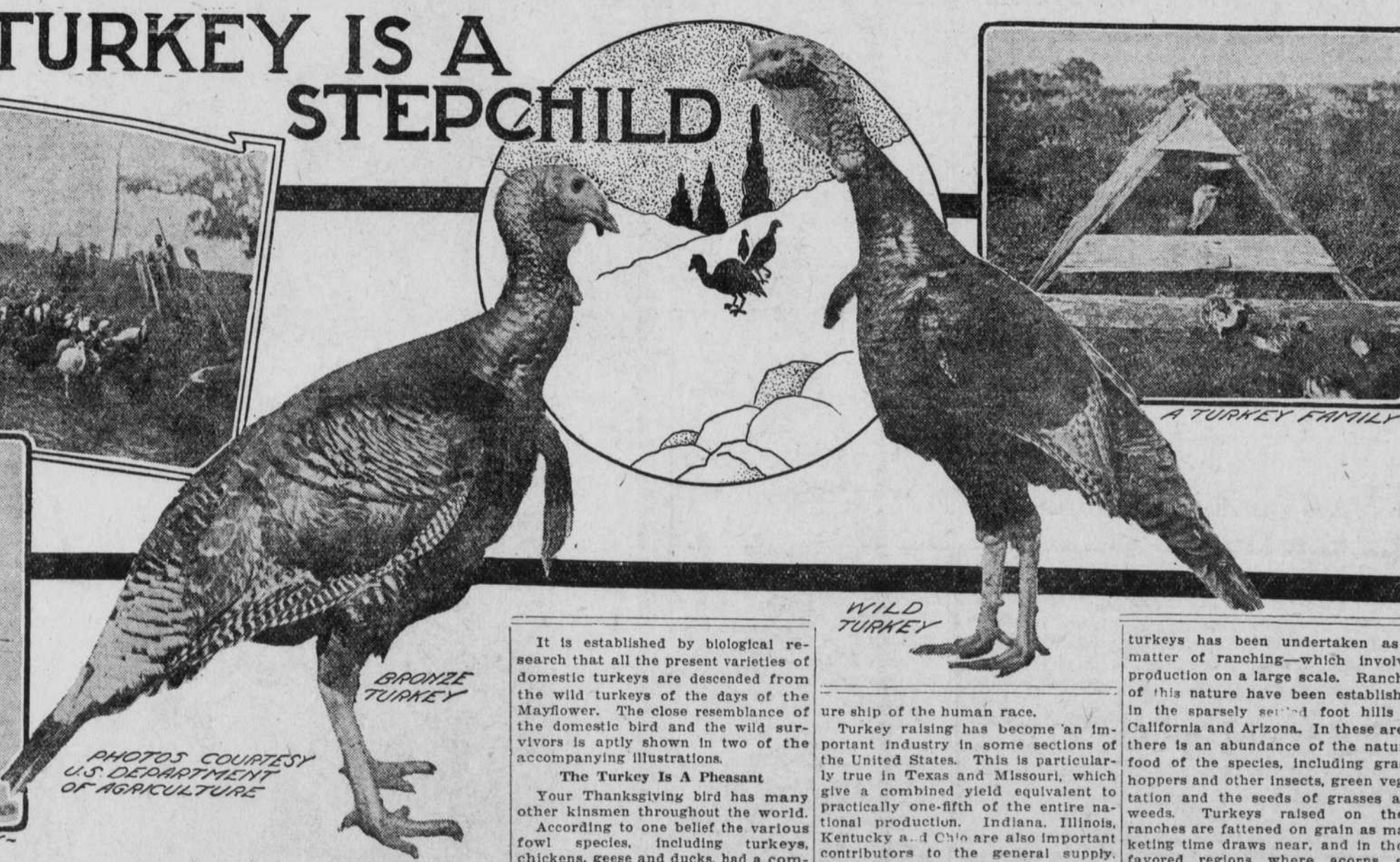
The bronze gobble or the Bourbon Red of the present day retains many of the characteristics of the native breed from which he is descended. In one important respect, however, the

domestic raising of these worthy birds has brought about a definite and important change. The old time wild turkey of our forebears was a bird weighing in the neighborhood of twelve pounds. The Bronze gobble of today attains a weight of 36 pounds—or three times as great as that of his woodland ancestor. The meaning of this increase growth is clear to any person who has been a member of a large family, in which a twelve pound bird would do little more than whet the collective appetite.

Turkeys have been in America for countless centuries. Nobody knows when they did not exist in the Western Hemisphere. The first explorers found them in all sections of the United States, from New England to Mexico. History shows that turkeys

were raised by the ancient Aztecs in the early Mexican civilization, and recent research has established that the birds were a standard article of diet with the race of the ancient Maya in Central America.

Early travelers introduced the bird into Europe and on that continent the turkey was greatly prized as a table dish on important feast days. Familiarity with this usage undoubtedly influenced the early colonists to choose the turkey as the national emblem of the Thanksgiving dinner. When Thanksgiving day was set apart as a time for worship and feasting the wild turkeys were so easily available and possessed of such pleasing flavor that historians agree that nothing could have been more natural than the choice of this bird as the principal feature of the holiday repast.



BRONZE
TURKEY

PHOTOS COURTESY
U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

It is established by biological research that all the present varieties of domestic turkeys are descended from the wild turkeys of the days of the Mayflower. The close resemblance of the domestic bird and the wild survivors is aptly shown in two of the accompanying illustrations.

The Turkey Is A Pheasant

Your Thanksgiving bird has many other kinsmen throughout the world. According to one belief the various fowl species, including turkeys, chickens, geese and ducks, had a common ancestor in the jungle fowl of prehistoric times.

The pheasant is an especially close kinsman of the Thanksgiving turkey. In truth the turkey himself is a form of pheasant. Biologists make the statement that the wild turkey of this country was the original representative of the pheasant group in the Western Hemisphere. The pheasant is a famous game bird in England and the ring-neck variety is now a familiar bird in America as well.

The age of the pheasant in England is uncertain, but there is good reason for the belief that the first of the species were taken to that country by the Romans in the early days of British history. In other parts of the world the bird is of ancient lineage. It is established by history that Jason, the seeker for the Golden Fleece, brought the pheasant from Colchis on the good ship Argo, the original

ship of the human race.

Turkey raising has become an important industry in some sections of the United States. This is particularly true in Texas and Missouri, which give a combined yield equivalent to practically one-fifth of the entire national production. Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Ohio are also important contributors to the general supply. This centralization of the industry in a few states is explained by the abundance of grain in those areas. For in these states it is possible to feed the flocks at comparatively little cost and to raise them with little trouble in the way of personal attention.

In the turkey belt the raising of the fowl is for the most part a matter of "flocks." Throughout the Central States a flock will contain perhaps seventy-five turkeys. In Texas the raisers go in for larger production and flocks containing several hundred birds are quite common. New England has lost its old-time prominence as to the number raised, but retains the established prestige of its reputation for fineness of quality. The birds are driven along the country roads in much the same way as herds of cattle or sheep.

Ranches For Turkeys

In some sections the raising of

turkeys has been undertaken as a matter of ranching—which involves production on a large scale. Ranches of this nature have been established in the sparsely settled foot hills of California and Arizona. In these areas there is an abundance of the natural food of the species, including grasshoppers and other insects, green vegetation and the seeds of grasses and weeds. Turkeys raised on these ranches are fattened on grain as marketing time draws near, and in those favored regions where acorns are abundant the grain is unnecessary. Turkeys have an inherited fondness for acorns and this fruit of the oak affords a diet on which the birds thrive and grow fat.

On these ranches the handling of the turkeys is closely akin to that practiced with sheep and cattle on the ranges of the West. Some outfits have a thousand or more fowl in process of growth at one time, and these birds are driven out to the feeding grounds each morning to be returned to safe quarters at night. Men and dogs are employed for tending the vast herds and the "turkey dog" becomes highly trained and extremely expert in keeping his charges in order.

In some sections turkey-bees are as popular as corn-huskings, and bring the neighbors together at various farms for the purpose of killing and dressing the fowls for the Thanksgiving or Christmas market.